ECONOMICS.

The question burns with financiers
  Of high and great degree
They do not seem to know at all
  What may net income be,
And Washington, though wisdom blest,
Can tell no more than all the rest.

Some tell you it is what is left
  Of all that you have made
When interest, operating cost,
  And taxes all are paid,
(Though how a tax may levied be
Before an income is, none see).

But after I have done all that
  I find to my dismay
The only things which I have left
  Are debts in great array
And I believe since times are vexed,
The Government will tax them next.

The Best Laid Plans

BY

CARLOTTA BENDIXA

Mrs. Tommy Terrell, who gave the dinner for a bevy of debutantes, always claims she had nothing at all to do with the matter; that it all happened so quickly that even had she wished to interfere, and she was by no means sure that she wanted to, any intervention on her part would have been impossible.

Dinner was over and Reta Bennison sat in a cosey nook adjoining the drawing room and idly watched the black-frocked men stroll in. From her half-hidden position she could see Richard Cardwell, 40 and florid, nervously flitting from group to group, unmistakably in search of herself. Cardwell at length caught sight of her, and in a few strides would have been at her side, when suddenly, with an impatient grunt, he turned, and walked away in the direction of the billiard room. Mrs. Terrell, her hostess, had borne down on the girl, one hand resting superfluously in the arm of a tall, bored-looking young man, rushing along in the lead and almost dragging her escort, who followed helplessly in her wake.

"For heaven's sake," she cried, "take this Britisher off my hands and find him a wife. I've had an accident and must run. You may safely present him to all the kiddies, they've all got money," she added, and with a malicious little grimace at him, off she dashed.

The two young people stared alternately at the precipitate flight of their hostess and at each other. Neither spoke for a moment, while the amused look on the man's face gave way to one of intent wonderment at the exquisite beauty of his companion. His gaze heightened for her the embarrassment of an already impossible situation. Finally he managed to blurt out, "Charming woman, Mrs. Tom, what?"

"Very," she replied, somewhat at a loss for words herself. "She evidently thinks we have met."

"We have," he mumbled, "at last. May I sit down?" She made room for him on the divan and he seated himself beside her, lapsing again into a silence that made her feel youngish and him rather foolish. Now as all this commenced to savor a little of a flirtation he became more at ease and said, "And so you are to find me a wife?"

"I believe Mrs. Tom tendered me the delicate commission. A rich girl I presume you—ah—require," she replied, laughingly using the pointed verb.

"I'm a fourth son and a fifth wheel," he replied, deprecatingly.

"And you couldn't love a poor girl?" she asked, banteringly.

"I—don't—know," he replied, hesitatingly, with a look at her so sincere in its honest admiration that the light in his eyes almost brought its complement to her own. "You don't happen to be rich?" he added, in a lighter vein.

"No, I am very poor," she replied, ruefully. "So poor that, while I eat at recurring intervals, I only dine when some good, kind fairy like Mrs. Tom asks me out. Men invite me to public restaurants, but, somehow, I never seem to go. Do you understand?" she added, wistfully.

"Yes," he replied, "I understand, and I am very, very glad. From your remarks I infer you are neither marrried nor engaged," he added, the rising inflection in his tones indicating a question. "Believe me," he went on, "I do not ask through idle curiosity," and his earnest manner contrasting strongly with his former badinage, led her to reply:

"I am not engaged to be married—as yet. Why do you ask?" And she fenced, wondering at her readiness to participate in what her reason told her could be nothing but a flirtation.

"Do you believe in love at first sight" he asked.

"No," she replied in a too evident attempt to ward off his insistent attack.

"And yet I loved the sight of you from the first," he said, vainly attempting to bring her eyes into alignment with his own.

"But you don't even know my name," she replied, weakly.

"Will you tell it me?"

She waited a moment, and then in a choky little voice said, "It is Reta—Reta Bennison. I am the widow of John Bennison, the banker. We were married two years ago. He was much older than I, but, oh, so rich—and all the little luxuries that he could give me, and that had been denied me all my life, appealed to me so strongly. I made no pretence of loving him and he could not have loved me, for—there was another woman. I left him and he secured a divorce on account of my desertion. He died shortly afterward. Do I bore you?"

"No, no," he replied, "and now?"

"Now," and she braced herself for the effort, "I am about to accept another man, a rich man, who I believe really does love me. But why do I tell you all this?"

"Because I, too, love you, Reta," he replied, huskily. "Will you listen to me for a moment?" And without waiting for her reply he went on: "I am Reginald Darrance; the governor is Lord Northwood. I'm beastly poor, too, as things are reckoned in the land of Pittsburgers, but with my profession—I'm an engineer, you know—my income really is enough to take care of us both quite comfortably. Mrs. Tom, who is a dear friend of mine, wanted me to make a wealthy alliance. Ridiculous, isn't it?" And for the moment he really forgot this had been the precise object of his visit. "Will you marry me?"

She glanced up suddenly and, seeing Cardwell re-enter the room, said hurriedly, "Quick, here comes the other man. Will you see me to my carriage?" He jumped up with alacrity as she rose, offered his arm, and together they rapidly left the room, she leading the way through the conservatory to the street, where her hired coachman waited. Reta stepped into the carriage and Darrance longingly held her hand, loth to part with her.

"Will you see me home?" she asked, tremulously.

"Will I?" he replied, joyously, as he jumped in after her.

. . . . . .

Mrs. Terrell had said good-night to all of her guests but Cardwell, who lingered, hat in hand, an angry flush deepening the natural red of his countenance. "When did Reta leave?" he demanded.

"I don't know," came the perplexed reply. "The last I saw of her she was in the west alcove with—" At this juncture Mrs. Tom's maid entered the room, holding up a bit of filmy lace. "Pardon, madame," she said. "After ze ladies go I find zis fishu."

"Reta's," murmured Mrs. Tom. "And, ma'am," said the butler, who had also appeared on the scene carrying a gentleman's hat and topcoat, "Mr. Darrance's things, ma'am. What shall I do with them, ma'am?"

With a smothered remark that would not look well in print, and a hasty good-night, Cardwell took his discomfited departure, while the servants, with turned backs, joined Mrs. Tom in a broad triangular grin.—Boston Post.

LESS PELLAGRA IN ITALY.

Government Measures Against the Disease Proving Successful.

Pellagra, the malady of misery, as it is commonly called, and malaria, the two endemic diseases of Italy, are the scourge of the poor. The two diseases rarely overlap. Generally where pellegra ends malaria begins.

Pellagra exists in forty-four of the sixty-nine provinces of Italy. It extends from Piedmont to Rome, from northern to central Italy. The Italian Government has undertaken the extirpation of both pellagra and malaria and has accomplished much in this direction.

A special law was passed by Parliament in 1902 to combat the malady, several special hospitals known as pellagrosari and exclusively used for this disease have been founded. a large sum of money is annually contributed to provide pellagrins with nourishing food and many other measures have been taken with the object of eradicating the scourge. The success of the campaign may be seen in statistics which show that pellagra is diminishing steadily. Between 1881 and 1899 pellagra had diminished by about one-third, while during the last ten years it has diminished by half. Besides, pellagra has also diminished in intensity. The malady has almost entirely disappeared from Piedmont and Liguria, and it is decreasing in Lombardy, Veneto and Emilia. This decrease is entirely due to the preventive measures taken against pellagra and especially to the laws of 1902.

This law prohibited the sale, exchange and grinding of imperfect corn, that is. either unripe or mouldy, and consequently the sale of corn flour. Every medical officer is bound to report without delay each case of pellagra and if the patient is poor besides a free cure he is entitled by law to a free substantial meal provided by the municipal or provincial authorities during three months in each year.

The provincial authorities are bound to provide special machines to dry corn artificially as well as buildings in which to store the corn owned by poor people who live in damp houses. The Home Office contributes the sum of $20,000 yearly toward the anti-pellagra campaign, while the Ministry of Agriculture contributes an equal sum, which is to be distributed in prizes and subsidies to encourage the anti-pellagra campaign. The same law ordered the free distribution of salt, a Government monopoly, to all poor pellagrins and their families, and the appointment of experts to analyze the corn used for food by the peasants. The authorities are bound to exchange good for faulty corn.

Other measures adopted by the Government against pellagra consist in the distribution among peasants of pamphlets containing advice, simple remedies and rules to be followed by the inhabitants of pellagra stricken regions.

WHEN THE KING TRAVELS.

Busy Time for Every Worker on the Railroad.

A royal visit is a busy time to more than the prospective host and hostess, for those who are responsible for their safe transportation, from the President of the railroad to

Why do we labor in this world? The attainable nobody wants; the unattainable nobody can have.